

SHORTER NOTES

A NEW COMBINATION IN ASPLENIUM.—A new fern was recently added to the flora of Alabama with the naming of the backcross hybrid \times *Asplenosorus boydstonae* Walter (Amer. Fern J. 72:62. 1982.). The type material was collected in Hale County, Alabama, in a locality famous for its fertile allopolyploid population of Scott's Spleenwort, which arose through hybridization of the Walking Fern and the Ebony Spleenwort. The new hybrid has Scott's Spleenwort and the Ebony Spleenwort as its parents. If the view is held that the Walking Fern belongs in the genus *Asplenium* rather than *Camptosorus*, the "hybrid genus" \times *Asplenosorus* is taxonomically superfluous. The new hybrid then needs to be placed in *Asplenium* and the epithet corrected in conformity with Art. 73.10 of the "International Code of Botanical Nomenclature":

***Asplenium* \times *boydstoniae* (Walter) Short, comb. nov.**

\times *Asplenosorus boydstonae* K. S. Walter, Amer. Fern J. 72:62. 1982. TYPE: Havana Glen, Hale Co., Alabama, Wagner & Walter 70011 (MICH not seen).

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ADIANTUM FURCATUM AND MICROSTAPHYLA FURCATA.—The island of St. Helena, outside the Gulf of Guinea off the west coast of Africa, is not only famous because it was the residence in exile of Napoleon Bonaparte. It has also produced a fern, *Microstaphyla bifurcata*, which stands out of proportion when its diminutive size (ca. 10–20 cm) is compared with the long list of names it has been called. Since the establishment of the genus *Microstaphyla* in 1851, it has been placed in no fewer than nine genera! The last revisionary treatment of *Microstaphyla* was by Maxon (J. Washington Acad. Sci. 13:28–31. 1923), who included among the synonyms the name *Adiantum furcatum* L. f. In the "Index Filicum," Christensen (1905) accepted that epithet as *Elaphoglossum furcatum* (L. f.) Christ. That basionym also accounts for the citation *Microstaphyla furcata* (L. f.) Presl, which has been used by some authors, including Maxon, who have overlooked Presl's explicit citation of *Osmunda bifurcata* Jacq. as the basionym of his combination.

In any event, accepting *A. furcatum* as a synonym for the sole species of *Microstaphyla* is an error which originated when the younger Linnaeus included a citation from Plukenet's "Mantissa," "*Filicula corniculata insula Helenae*." Although Plukenet's polynomial indeed corresponds to *M. bifurcata*, it was erroneously interpreted by the younger Linnaeus to be the same as his *A. furcatum* (Sp. Pl. Suppl. 447. 1781), a plant he reported as "*in Cap. Bonae Spei et insula Helenae*. Thunberg. Thouin." Although Thunberg collected in the Cape and Thouin in Reunión, neither of them set foot on St. Helena, where *Microstaphyla* is endemic. Furthermore, *A. furcatum* is not an *Adiantum* at all, but is *Asplenium achilleifolium* (Lam.) C. Chr. (syn. *A. rutaefolium* (Berg.) Kunze). For this reason, the Linnaean epithet should be deleted as a synonym of *M. bifurcata* (Jacq.) Presl, the correct name.—Luis Diego Gómez P., Museo Nacional de Costa Rica, Apartado 749, San José, Costa Rica.